

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method for workforce procurement and management using a
2 hosted network application, the method comprising:
 - 3 maintaining a plurality of modules accessible at varying levels to
4 different participants in a workforce procurement and management process, the
5 modules comprising,
 - 6 an exchange module comprising a search function;
 - 7 a skills fulfillment module comprising,
 - 8 a skills requirement function for specifying skills
9 required for a project; and
 - 10 a settlement function for tracking expenditures on a
11 project;
 - 12 a resource management module comprising a work journal
13 function for collecting information about the activity of an individual
14 contractor;
 - 15 a knowledge management module comprising a reporting
16 function and an analysis function; and
 - 17 maintaining a database coupled to the plurality of modules.

- 1 2. The method of claim 1, wherein the exchange module further
2 comprises:
 - 3 a sourcing function for specifying sourcing preference and rules for a
4 project; and
 - 5 a transaction management function for managing a hiring process
6 including sourcing, interviewing, and negotiation.

- 1 3. The method of claim 1, wherein the skills fulfillment module
2 further comprises:
 - 3 a request for proposal (RFP) function for entering an RFP;
 - 4 a work order function for documenting terms and conditions of a
5 project;

6 a purchase order function for generating a purchase order in response to
7 an approved work order;

8 a logistics management function for facilitating the logistical
9 components of a hiring process including management of blood testing,
10 badging, and facilities;

11 a fulfillment management function for managing the fulfillment of
12 sourcing requirements, including maintaining a status of sourcing requirements.

13 a risk management function for facilitating the pre-qualification of a
14 contractor and a consultant and for monitoring compliance with government
15 rules and regulations.

1 4. The method of claim 1, wherein the resource management
2 module further comprises an expense reporting function.

1 5. The method of claim 1, wherein the plurality of modules further
2 comprises:

3 a supply management module comprising a supplier network function
4 and a digital portfolio function;

5 a supplier workbench module comprising a supplier workbench
6 function; and

7 a common functions module comprising:
8 an administration function;
9 a workflow function;
10 a catalog function; and
11 an agreements function.

1 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the different participants include
2 a contractor who is an individual contingent worker, a client who is an
3 employee of an enterprise, a recruiter who sells a service of finding contingent
4 workers, and a staffing supplier who sells a service of finding contingent
5 workers, including finding multiple contingent workers to staff a project.

1 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the participant includes a
2 contractor, a staffing supplier, and a recruiter, and wherein the predetermined

3 criteria includes a list of staffing suppliers, and a list of skills, and wherein the
4 predetermined criteria are generated by the analysis function.

1 8. The method of claim 7, wherein the different participants have
2 varying levels of access to the hosted network application based upon attributes,
3 wherein attributes include personal attributes associated with a participant, and
4 enterprise attributes associated with an enterprise using the hosted network
5 application.

1 9. The method of claim 1, wherein the work journal function
2 comprises:

3 the contractor entering data into a work journal data entity, wherein the
4 entered data comprises,
5 hours worked;
6 type of work done; and
7 comments regarding work done;
8 a client who is a manager reviewing the work journal data entity;
9 the manager approving the work journal data entity; and
10 the manager entering comments into the work journal data entity.

1 10. The method of claim 5, wherein the digital portfolio function
2 comprises:

3 populating a digital portfolio data entity with data extracted from an
4 electronic resume;
5 populating the digital portfolio data entity with data from systems
6 external to the hosted network application; and
7 automatically updating the digital portfolio data entity with data from
8 the work journal data entity.

1 11. The method of claim 1, wherein the search function comprises;
2 performing a search for a contractor based upon predetermined criteria
3 entered by a participant;
4 performing a search for a contingent position based upon predetermined
5 search criteria entered by the participant;

6 searching the database, including searching a plurality of digital
7 portfolio data entities; and
8 searching a plurality of public databases that are not part of the hosted
9 application.

1 12. The method of claim 3, wherein the work order function
2 comprises;

3 a participant generating a work order based upon a successful search for
4 a contractor;

5 at least one participant reviewing the work order at least one level in
6 order to determine whether to approve the work order;

7 if the work order is not approved, returning the work order to a level
8 below the level at which it was not approved; and

9 collecting data regarding the work order, approval, and failure to
10 approve in the database, wherein the knowledge management module accesses
11 the collected data.

1 13. The method of claim 12, wherein the work order function further
2 comprises associating a purchase order with the work order when the work
3 order is approved.

1 14. The method of claim 1, wherein the settlement function
2 comprises:

3 submitting the approved work journal of a contractor to a staffing
4 supplier associated with the contractor;

5 generating an invoice;

6 submitting the invoice to the manager for approval;

7 if the invoice is approved submitting the invoice to accounts payable for
8 processing;

9 storing data regarding the settlement function in the database, wherein
10 the knowledge management module accesses the stored data.

1 15. The method of claim 3, wherein the request for proposal function
2 comprises:

3 receiving a request for proposal including a list of required contingent
4 workers and their associated skills;
5 linking the request for proposal with a project specification that includes
6 data regarding a project to be staffed;
7 generating a search based upon the request for proposal and the project
8 specification, wherein the search uses the exchange module;
9 broadcasting at least part of the request for proposal to publicly
10 accessible applications;
11 receiving responses to the request for proposal;
12 conducting bargaining based upon responses to the request for proposal
13 including auctions and reverse auctions.

1 16. The method of claim 1, wherein the reporting function comprises
2 generating at least one report using data including data generated by the
3 plurality of modules and stored in the database.

1 17. The method of claim 1, wherein the analysis function comprises:
2 automatically performing an analysis of at least one report based upon
3 criteria selected by a participant; and
4 the participant changing at least one attribute based upon a review of the
5 analysis.

1 18. The method of claim 1, wherein the hosted network application
2 is hosted on the Internet.

1 19. A system for workforce procurement and management using a
2 hosted network application, comprising:
3 a plurality of web servers for hosting a workforce procurement and
4 management application;
5 at least one database server;
6 at least one database for storing a plurality of data including the
7 workforce procurement and management application, wherein the workforce
8 procurement and management application includes a plurality of modules

9 accessible at varying levels to different participants in a hosted workforce
10 procurement and management process, the modules comprising,
11 an exchange module comprising a search function;
12 a skills fulfillment module comprising,
13 a skills requirement function for specifying skills
14 required for a project; and
15 a settlement function for tracking expenditures on a
16 project;
17 resource management module comprising a work journal
18 function for collecting information about the activity of an individual
19 contractor;
20 a knowledge management module comprising a reporting
21 function and an analysis function; and
22 maintaining a database coupled to the plurality of modules.

1 20. The system of claim 19, wherein the exchange module further
2 comprises:
3 a sourcing function for specifying sourcing preference and rules for a
4 project; and
5 a transaction management function for managing a hiring process
6 including sourcing, interviewing, and negotiation.

1 21. The system of claim 19, wherein the skills fulfillment module
2 further comprises:
3 a request for proposal (RFP) function for entering an RFP;
4 a work order function for documenting terms and conditions of a
5 project;
6 a purchase order function for generating a purchase order in response to
7 an approved work order;
8 a logistics management function for facilitating the logistical
9 components of a hiring process including management of blood testing,
10 badging, and facilities;

11 a fulfillment management function for managing the fulfillment of
12 sourcing requirements, including maintaining a status of sourcing requirements.

13 a risk management function for facilitating the pre-qualification of a
14 contractor and a consultant and for monitoring compliance with government
15 rules and regulations.

1 22. The system of claim 19, wherein the resource management
2 module further comprises an expense reporting function.

1 23. The system of claim 19, wherein the plurality of modules further
2 comprises:

3 a supply management module comprising a supplier network function
4 and a digital portfolio function;

5 a supplier workbench module comprising a supplier workbench
6 function; and

7 a common functions module comprising:

8 an administration function;

9 a workflow function;

10 a catalog function; and

11 an agreements function.

1 24. The system of claim 19, wherein the different participants
2 include a contractor who is an individual contingent worker, a client who is an
3 employee of an enterprise, a recruiter who sells a service of finding contingent
4 workers, and a staffing supplier who sells a service of finding contingent
5 workers, including finding multiple contingent workers to staff a project.

1 25. The system of claim 24, wherein the participant includes a
2 contractor, a staffing supplier, and a recruiter, and wherein the predetermined
3 criteria includes a list of staffing suppliers, and a list of skills, and wherein the
4 predetermined criteria are generated by the analysis function.

1 26. The system of claim 25, wherein the different participants have
2 varying levels of access to the hosted network application based upon attributes,

3 wherein attributes include personal attributes associated with a participant, and
4 enterprise attributes associated with an enterprise using the hosted network
5 application.

1 27. The system of claim 19, wherein the work journal function
2 comprises:

3 the contractor entering data into a work journal data entity, wherein the
4 entered data comprises,
5 hours worked;
6 type of work done; and
7 comments regarding work done;
8 a client who is a manager reviewing the work journal data entity;
9 the manager approving the work journal data entity; and
10 the manager entering comments into the work journal data entity.

1 28. The system of claim 23, wherein the digital portfolio function
2 comprises:

3 populating a digital portfolio data entity with data extracted from an
4 electronic resume;
5 populating the digital portfolio data entity with data from systems
6 external to the hosted network application; and
7 automatically updating the digital portfolio data entity with data from
8 the work journal data entity.

1 29. The system of claim 19, wherein the search function comprises;
2 performing a search for a contractor based upon predetermined criteria
3 entered by a participant;
4 performing a search for a contingent position based upon predetermined
5 search criteria entered by the participant;
6 searching the database, including searching a plurality of digital
7 portfolio data entities; and
8 searching a plurality of public databases that are not part of the hosted
9 application.

1 30. The system of claim 21, wherein the work order function
2 comprises;
3 a participant generating a work order based upon a successful search for
4 a contractor;
5 at least one participant reviewing the work order at least one level in
6 order to determine whether to approve the work order;
7 if the work order is not approved, returning the work order to a level
8 below the level at which it was not approved; and
9 collecting data regarding the work order, approval, and failure to
10 approve in the database, wherein the knowledge management module accesses
11 the collected data.

1 31. The system of claim 30, wherein the work order function further
2 comprises associating a purchase order with the work order when the work
3 order is approved.

1 32. The system of claim 19, wherein the settlement function
2 comprises:
3 submitting the approved work journal of a contractor to a staffing
4 supplier associated with the contractor;
5 generating an invoice;
6 submitting the invoice to the manager for approval;
7 if the invoice is approved submitting the invoice to accounts payable for
8 processing;
9 storing data regarding the settlement function in the database, wherein
10 the knowledge management module accesses the stored data.

1 33. The system of claim 21, wherein the request for proposal
2 function comprises:
3 receiving a request for proposal including a list of required contingent
4 workers and their associated skills;
5 linking the request for proposal with a project specification that includes
6 data regarding a project to be staffed;

7 generating a search based upon the request for proposal and the project
8 specification, wherein the search uses the exchange module;
9 broadcasting at least part of the request for proposal to publicly
10 accessible applications;
11 receiving responses to the request for proposal;
12 conducting bargaining based upon responses to the request for proposal
13 including auctions and reverse auctions.

1 34. The system of claim 19, wherein the reporting function
2 comprises generating at least one report using data including data generated by
3 the plurality of modules and stored in the database.

1 35. The system of claim 19, wherein the analysis function comprises:
2 automatically performing an analysis of at least one report based upon
3 criteria selected by a participant; and
4 the participant changing at least one attribute based upon a review of the
5 analysis.

1 36. The system of claim 19, wherein the hosted network application
2 is hosted on the Internet.

1 37. An electromagnetic medium containing executable instructions
2 which, when executed in a processing system, cause the system to perform
3 workforce management, wherein performing workforce procurement comprises:
4 receiving a staffing requirement for a projects;
5 searching a database of digital portfolios to find at least one suitable
6 contractor for the project;
7 filling the staffing requirement with the at least one contractor; and
8 automatically updating a digital portfolio of the at least one contractor
9 using data entered by the at least one contractor and at least one supervisor of
10 the at least one contractor.

1 38. The electromagnetic medium of claim 37, wherein performing
2 workforce management further comprises maintaining a work journal for the at

3 least one contractor, including automatically updating work journal, using data
4 input by the at least one contractor and at least one supervisor of the at least one
5 contractor regarding job performance of the at least one contractor.

1 39. The electromagnetic medium of claim 38, wherein performing
2 workforce management further comprises generating payments to the at least
3 one contractor and to third parties using data from the work journal and invoice
4 data entered by a manager.

1 40. The electromagnetic medium of claim 39, wherein performing
2 workforce management further comprises generating reports regarding the
3 project using data from the work journal.